

# Madigan employee earns award for strong work ethic

Though deaf since birth  
natural communicator excels

By Phillip Eugene  
Northwest Guardian

Though 32-year-old Teresa Worthy has been deaf since birth, her work ethic at Madigan Army Medical Center's Patient Administration Division has earned her three promotions in four years, and selection for this year's Outstanding Employee With a Disability award.

To be considered for the award, nominees must exceed job requirements in

spite of limiting physical factors. Competition judge Bernard Olson from the Washington State Governor's Advisory Committee on Disability Issues and Employment keyed on Worthy's three promotions in a short period, her ability to excel in all duties, and especially her productivity in the PAD's chart room.

"During her time in the chart room, our delinquent rate dropped from 50 percent to less than 10 percent," said Kathryn Pegum chief, medical records branch.

Worthy's accomplishment in the chart room is exceptional for someone with a disability like hers, because she is required to interact extensively with physicians, according to Pegum.

"She is an extraordinarily fast learner," said Eileen Kosel, coding supervisor in patient administration.

When she first started at the PAD's inpatient records division Worthy got permission to teach weekly sign language classes to co-workers to help bridge the communication gap.

Worthy was able to motivate even the workers who were hesitant about attending her classes, according to Sherry Bunton, lead medical clerk.

"She would go over and tap them on the shoulder look at her watch and let them know that it's time for class," Bunton said.

Worthy's classes, which are now routine in the PAD's coding department

where she currently works, sometimes cause her co-workers to overlook her disability.

"She blends in with us so well," Kosel said. "She is really easy to work with."

In 1990 Worthy graduated from North Thurston High School in Olympia and was the school's first hearing-impaired woman speaker.

Worthy was also the first woman graduation speaker in 2000 when she graduated from South Puget Sound Community College, in Olympia, with an associates degree in art and general



Worthy

studies. Currently, she is enrolled in Tacoma Community College's health information program.

"I want to see my three children graduate and have careers like me," Worthy said. "I want to be a role model for them."

Worthy was selected ahead of two other nominees, and is now eligible for the Health Service Command award.

Ultimately, she could compete for the award at the Department of the Army level.

The award is designed to identify recognize and publicize the achievements of outstanding employees with disabilities, who have made significant contributions to the Army mission.

## Making a difference



J. C. Mathews



Spc. Sarah Wilkins

**Top:** Cassandra Kingsley, 15, Kai Hopkins, 5, and Shanee Miller, 14, patrol the Russell Landing beach for trash Oct. 23 as part of a Protestant Youth of the Chapel service project for Make a Difference Day. About 14 PYOC members turned out to clean up Russell Landing and the trail to Shoreline Park.

**Above left:** Lt. Col. Bob Johnson helps his son, Bobby, load leaves into a plastic bag while giving instructions to one of his Soldiers, Pvt. Curtis Duenez, during Make a Difference Day Oct. 23 at Mann Middle



Jason Kaye

School. More than 40 Soldiers and family members from 593rd Corps Support Group linked up on a Saturday morning to clean up and beautify the school grounds.

**Above right:** Sgt. 1st Class Michael Lezynski of the 3rd Bn., 364th Eng. Regt. demolishes an old barn in Spanaway. About 30 Soldiers from the 4th Bde., 91st Div. helped out with the demolition. The site will be used for a new elementary school, and the work saved the Bethel School District several thousand dollars.

## Officials open new Strategic Deployment Center

By J.C. Mathews  
Northwest Guardian

Installation and local leaders lined up Oct. 19 to cut the ribbon formally opening Fort Lewis' new Strategic Deployment Center.

But the gesture was mostly symbolic. Although the finishing touches were put on the center recently, the pace of deployments led the post to draft parts of it into use as much as a year ago, to help move 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division to Iraq.

"So it's already been in use, and it could not have come at a better time, because we are absolutely busy as can be, as you all know, getting soldiers in and out of here to the war zone," said Lt. Gen. Edward Soriano, 1st Corps commander, during the dedication ceremony.

Since then, it has processed the Army National Guard's 81st Armor Brigade, the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, and others for deployment. And officials from the installation's Joint Transportation Directorate, which manages the facility, say it repre-

sents a quantum leap forward from the World War II-era wooden facilities previously used.

The \$32-million facility is designed to efficiently process units and their equipment for deployment. With inspection pits set into its 22,000-square-foot floor, the center's main building can be used to check 600 to 800 military vehicles daily, said Lonnie Galatas, head of unit movements for the JTD. The center also includes a maintenance facility and scale houses for weighing equipment before movement.

An adjoining rail yard offers ramp loading at 11 rail spurs, eight of them newly constructed. Galatas says the new rail spurs can accommodate up to 20 rail cars each.

The center also features a fenced vehicle staging area capable of storing 600 vehicles and two paved parking areas that can hold 300 to 400 shipping containers.

Soriano said the new facility adds to the installation's distinction as the Army's only West Coast power projection platform.

"It just keeps getting better and better for Fort Lewis, in terms of our infrastructure," Soriano said. "This deployment capability firmly enhances Fort Lewis' stature as one of the Army's power projection platforms."

Representative Norm Dicks from Washington's 6th District also spoke at the ceremony. Dicks, a member of the House Appropriations Committee and its defense and military construction subcommittees, pressed for inclusion of funds for the facility in the fiscal 2002 military construction bill.

"This facility, along with Fort Lewis' strategic partnership with McChord Air Force Base and the Port of Tacoma, will bring together road, rail, air and sea to transport Army units to where the action is as quickly as possible," Dicks said.

"It's an incredible facility, it further enhances our power projection capabilities, and all of this could not happen without the support of Congressman Dicks," Soriano said. "There is not a better supporter for our Army and our installation and our community than Congressman Dicks."

## During visit to Kuwait, Soriano tells Soldiers 'we're real proud'

By Sgt. Vanessa Bagley  
377th Theater Support Command

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait — Spc. Joshua C. Nation doesn't mind working in a restricted area that's isolated from the main camp, even though he has to leave the area altogether just to light up a cigarette.

He and other Soldiers of the 80th Ordnance Battalion out of Fort Lewis know it's safety first when surrounded by bunkers stocked high with munitions.

"At first it was (intimidating), but you get used to it. It's relatively safe," said Nation, an ammunition specialist. The ammunition supply point here stores everything from small-arms rounds to rockets. Nation is part of a team that inspects bunkers at the ASP for proper segregation and storage of the munitions.

Some of the stored ammunition goes to units bound for Iraq.

The 80th can supply ammunition to a

unit as large as a brigade at any given time, said ammunition inspector and tasking non-commissioned officer in charge Staff Sgt. Brian Womack.

The ordnance battalion and its supporting units are also responsible for collecting ammunition from redeploying units and amnesty boxes.

"We segregate it and ... basically put it back in the system," said Womack.

80th Soldiers received special recognition for their work from Lt. Gen. Edward Soriano, commanding general of 1st Corps and Fort Lewis, during his recent visit to Kuwait.

He spoke with the Soldiers over dinner at the Zone 2 dining facility Oct. 10 and recognized outstanding individuals with coins.

"We're real proud of you, and we want to thank you for what you're doing," said Soriano to the Soldiers. "You're making a difference."

Nation was among the Soldiers who received a coin from Soriano that night.